

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 FBIE-00 USSS-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11

L-03 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 SY-04

SCCT-02 IO-14 A-01 OPR-02 AID-20 DRC-01 /125 W

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O 022310Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1644

INFO USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0297

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTO DOMINGO 4062

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: HUTCHISON CASE: MEETING WITH POLICE CHIEF GUZMAN MORNING
OCTOBER 2

1. HAVING BEEN UNABLE YESTERDAY TO MAKE CONTACT WITH POLICE CHIEF GUZMAN, WHO SPENT MOST OF THE DAY OUT OF TOWN ATTENDING THE FUNERAL OF A MILITARY OFFICER FRIEND, I FINALLY REACHED HIM EARLY THIS MORNING AND HAD A CHAT WITH HIM AND SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS FOR ABOUT AN HOUR. DURING THIS CONVERSATION, I OBTAINED SOME ADDITIONAL CURRENT PIECES OF INFORMATION AND WAS ABLE AT THE SAME TIME TO TAKE UP WITH HIM SOME SUGGESTIONS WHICH I HAD DISCUSSED WITH THE DEPARTMENT.

2. FIRST, GUZMAN MADE CLEAR THAT HE REMAINED THE EXECUTING ARM OF GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE KIDNAPPING SITUATION. HOWEVER, HE TOLD ME, A COMMITTEE HAD NOW BEEN ESTABLISHED HEADED BY THE PRESIDENT AND INCLUDING AS ADVISORS THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES (ADMIRAL JIMENEZ), THE 3 SERVICE CHIEFS OF STAFF (GENERAL PEREZ Y PEREZ, ADMIRAL LOGRONO AND AIR FORCE
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GENERAL LLUBERES, AND GUZMAN. WHILE I WAS TALKING WITH GUZMAN,

HE RECEIVED 2 CALLS WHICH EVIDENTLY CAME FROM JIMENEZ. IN THE FIRST CONVERSATION I HEARD GUZMAN SAY THAT "NOTHING WENT IN LAST NIGHT." HE THEN TOLD HIS CALLER THAT HE WOULD LET SANDWICHES GO IN AT 10:00, AND ADDED "NO, WE'LL MAKE IT AT 11:00. LET THEM WAIT." IN THE SECOND PHONE CALL, GUZMAN TOLD THE CALLER ("MI ALMIRANTE") THAT HE WOULD GO OVER TO SEE HIM RIGHT AWAY.

3. GUZMAN ALSO ADVISED ME THAT MSGR. POLANCO WOULD NO LONGER BE PERMITTED TO DELIVER PROVISIONS OR OTHERWISE APPROACH THE BUILDING THROUGH THE POLICE LINES. HE SAID THAT THIS DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN YESTERDAY AT THE PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH THE MILITARY CHIEFS. INSTEAD OF POLANCO, A NEWSPAPER MAN WOULD BE DESIGNATED TO CARRY THE PROVISIONS TO THE DOOR STEP BUT HE WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DIALOGUE WITH THE KIDNAPPERS. ASKED WHETHER THE NEWSPAPER MAN WOULD BE RAFAEL HERRERA (THE EDITOR OF THE NEWSPAPER LISTIN DIARIO WHOM MENDEZ VARGAS HAD NAMED AS ONE OF THE FOUR PEOPLE THE TERRORIST GROUP WANTED TO SERVE AS A NEGOTIATING COMMISSION), GUZMAN REPLIED THAT HERRERA HAD NOT YET RETURNED FROM GERMANY. (COMMENT: POLANCO IS INTENSELY DISLIKED AND DISTRUSTED BY THE MILITARY CHIEFS. LAST WEEK HE DELIVERED A SERMON IN THE PRESIDENT'S PRESENCE DEPLORING THE CONDITIONS OF PRISONERS. BECAUSE OF SUCH FEELING TOWARD POLANCO, IT MAY BE THAT THE GOVERNMENT REFUSED TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH HIM AND PREFERRED TO HAVE THE DIPLOMATS OF THE 3 COUNTRIES CONCERNED ACT AS A BUFFER WITH HIM).

4. GUZMAN REFERRED TO AN EDITORIAL IN TODAY'S "EL CARIBE" WHICH HE SAID WAS VERY GOOD, DEPLORING THE TERRORIST ACTION. HE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA FOR THE KIDNAPPERS TO KNOW ABOUT THIS EDITORIAL AND HE WAS THEREFORE ASKING TO HAVE IT BROADCAST OVER THE RADIO. I POINTED OUT THAT THE BATTERIES IN THE TRANSISTOR RADIOS OF THE KIDNAPPERS WERE WEAKENED AND THAT THEIR RECEPTION WOULD THEREFORE BE POOR. CONSEQUENTLY, I SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVT PERMIT NEW BATTERIES TO BE TAKEN INTO THE CONSULATE ALONG WITH THE FOOD. GUZMAN SEEMED TO SQUIRM AT THIS SUGGESTION AND MADE NO REPLY. I THEN TOOK UP WITH HIM THE IDEA OF SENDING SELECTED PRESS CLIPPINGS INTO THE CONSULATE ALONG WITH THE PROVISIONS WHICH WOULD INSURE THAT THE KIDNAPPERS

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WERE AWARE OF OPINION DEPLORING THE ACTION IF THE RADIOS WERE NOT WORKING. GUZMAN READILY AGREED AND CUT OUT HIMSELF THE CLIPPING FROM EL CARIBE TO BE ADDED TO THE OTHERS THAT I SHOWED HIM.

5. I NEXT TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE THE POINT CONCERNING THE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE IMAGE OF THE DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT OF ITS TACTICS, AS DISCUSSED IN MY EXCHANGES WITH THE DEPT.

ON THIS POINT, I LAID PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE ADVERSE IMPRESSION CREATED BY WITHDRAWING AUTHORIZATION FOR POLANCO TO ENTER INTO CONTACT WITH THE CAPTORS. COMMENTATORS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY PLAY UP THE ASPECT OF PREVENTING A PRIEST FROM CARRYING OUT A HUMANITARIAN MISSION.

6. PURSUING THE ASPECT OF HUMANITARIAN CONCERN, I POINTED OUT THAT WHILE THERE DID NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY IMMINENT THREAT TO THE LIFE OF MISS HUTCHISON AND THE OTHER HOSTAGES THROUGH FORCEFUL ACTION, THE HOSTAGES COULD ALSO LOSE THEIR LIVES THROUGH ILLNESS BECAUSE OF THEIR LOW PHYSICAL RESISTANCE. IF MISS HUTCHISON BECAME SICK, I CONTINUED, I WOULD BE INSISTING ON GETTING A DOCTOR TO HER. THIS WAS A SITUATION WHICH NEITHER I NOR THE DOMINICAN AUTHORITIES WOULD RELISH. I DESCRIBED AS GRAPHICALLY AS I COULD BY WORDS AND GESTURES WHAT

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THE ODORS MUST BE LIKE IN THE TOILET BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF WATER AND SUGGESTED THAT AUTHORIZATION BE GIVEN FOR WATER TO BE DELIVERED TO THE CONSULATE FOR SANITARY PURPOSES. THIS WOULD NOT ONLY SHOW THE GOVT'S HUMANITARIAN CONCERN BUT ALSO THAT THE GOVT WAS THINKING OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE SITUATION AND TAKING INITIATIVES. GUZMAN SEEMED RECEPTIVE TO THIS IDEA,

ADDING THAT PERHAPS SALT WATER COULD BE SENT IN SO THAT IT COULD NOT BE USED FOR DRINKING PURPOSES. HE HIMSELF PERCEIVED NO OBJECTION TO THE IDEA AND HE WOULD PASS IT ON.

7. DRAWING ON THE HELPFUL INFORMATION OBTAINED TELEPHONICALLY FROM THE DEPT LAST NIGHT CONCERNING MINIMUM WATER AND FOOD REQUIREMENTS, I NOTED TO GUZMAN THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF 2000 CC'S OF WATER FOR HUMAN SURVIVAL AND REMINDED HIM OF THE STATEMENT IN MISS HUTCHISON'S NOTE TO ME THAT SHE WAS GETTING ONLY A HALF CUP OF WATER APPARENTLY PER DAY. IF THE GOVT'S CURRENT TACTICS OF LIMITING FOOD SUPPLIES CONTINUED, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO AGREE ON THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS IN ORDER NOT TO LOWER THE HOSTAGES' RESISTANCE TO ILLNESS.

8. I THEN DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH THE TACTICS AND PSYCHOLOGY
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OF DEALING WITH THE KIDNAPPERS. GUZMAN NODDED AGREEMENT WITH MY FEELING THAT A SOLUTION WAS MORE LIKELY TO TAKE WEEKS THAN DAYS. CONTINUING, I SAID IT WAS A FAIR ASSUMPTION THAT THE REFUSAL OF THE CAPTORS TO PERMIT MATTRESSES TO BE SENT INTO THE CONSULATE MEANT THAT THE CAPTORS DID NOT WANT TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY EXPECTED THE SITUATION TO BE PROLONGED. THIS APPEARED TO REFLECT A GREAT PSYCHOLOGICAL WEAKNESS FOR THE KIDNAPPERS. WHILE MENDEZ APPEARED TO BE CALM, THERE WERE EVIDENTLY SOME NERVOUS YOUNG MEN AMONG THE OTHER CAPTORS. MENDEZ PROBABLY WAS TELLING THEM THAT IT WOULD ALL BE OVER SOON AND THAT THE GOVT'S ACTION IN REDUCING FOOD AND WATER SUPPLY SHOWED THAT THE GOVT WAS ANXIOUS TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION QUICKLY. IN VIEW OF THE CONVICTION OF THE GOVT THAT THE CAPTORS WOULD NOT HARM THE HOSTAGES, AND OF THE CAPTORS THAT THE GOVT WOULD NOT GO TO SUCH EXTREMES AS TO PERMIT THE HOSTAGES TO DIE OF STARVATION OR THIRST, CUTTING THE SUPPLIES WOULD NOT IMPRESS THE CAPTORS. RATHER, SUCH ACTION WOULD MAKE IT APPEAR THAT THE DOMINICAN AUTHORITIES WERE APPLYING PRESSURE BECAUSE THEY WERE ANXIOUS FOR A QUICK SOLUTION AND THIS WOULD SERVE TO KEEP UP THE HOPES OF THE KIDNAPPERS. THEREFORE, I CONCLUDED, IT WOULD BE WORTH CONSIDERING A CHANGE IN THE GOVT TACTICS TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF A LONG HAUL. PERHAPS THICK BOOKS, RECORD PLAYERS, AMPLE CHANGES OF CLOTHING, ETC. COULD BE SENT IN TO INDICATE THAT THE GOVT WAS IN NO HURRY. SUCH AN IMPRESSION MIGHT PROMPT THE MORE NERVOUS TYPES AMONG THE CAPTORS TO INTENSIFY PRESSURE ON MENDEZ FOR A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION THROUGH WHICH THE CAPTORS COULD GET OUT ALIVE AND UNHARMED. THIS APPROACH, I NOTED, WOULD HAVE THE ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE OF PROJECTING TO PUBLIC OPINION A FAVORABLE IMAGE OF THE DOMINICAN GOVT'S POSITION. TO ALL THIS, GUZMAN AND HIS COLLEAGUES LISTENED INTENTLY AND INDICATED THAT THE IDEA WAS WORTH CONSIDERATION.

9. AFTER THE MEETING WITH GUZMAN, I MET WITH MEMBERS OF MY STAFF WHO ARE IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE MILITARY AND ASKED THEM TO TAKE THE LINE ON THE ADVANTAGES OF A LONG HAUL APPROACH IN THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH DOMINICAN OFFICIALS WHEN THE SUBJECT OF KIDNAPPERS COMES UP.

10. AT 11:00 A.M. MY SPANISH AND VENEZUELAN COLLEAGUES AND I ARE MEETING WITH QUEZADA. I ALSO HAVE AN APPOINTMENT AT 4 P.M.
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WITH JIMENEZ AND WILL TRY TO SEE THE OTHER MILITARY CHIEFS AS SOON AS I CAN TO DISCUSS WITH THEM TACTICS OF DEALING WITH THE KIDNAPPERS.
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